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THREE *Mather (Cotton)*
LETTERS
FROM
NEW-ENGLAND,
Relating to the
CONTROVERSY
OF THE
PRESENT TIME.



L O N D O N,
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LETTERS

TO

THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE



WASHINGTON

1877



*To the Reverend Mr. Thomas
Bradbury, Minister of the
Gospel in London.*

S I R,

IT is not easy for mine, or any Pen
whatever, fully to report to you, the
Lamentations which are heard here a-
mong your Friends, upon the most
grievous Tidings that ever passed over
the *Atlantick* to us: For such are the Tidings of the
Schism arisen among our *United Brethren*, upon the
Opinions which disturb, and even destroy the Faith,
in which all the Saints for many Ages have still
found the *Life of their Hand*, in living unto God:
The Tidings which caused us to cry out, *Good God,*
unto what Times hast thou reserved us!

Your Brethren on the *American Strand*, so far as
I am acquainted with them, cannot see an All-suffi-
cient SAVIOUR, who is not in his *Essence* one with
the Infinite and Eternal God, and so, *equal with God.*

It surprizes them to see that the Vomit of a *Va-
lentinus Gentilis*, lick'd up by the vain Mind of Some-
body, (in this Way willing to be *Somebody*) and
spued out again in the *English* Tongue, should be so
greedily

greedily imbibed by Multitudes, who are loth to herd with the grosser *Arians*.

They have not an *Evil Surmise*, that all who have lately refused a *Subscription* to the Truth, (which will out-live all the Wrongs that any Enemies or Deserters can do unto it) have gone over to *Arianism*, or to so much as *Gentilism*. Nevertheless, they wonder why they who subscribed the first of the XXXIX Articles, to qualify themselves for the publick *Exercise* of their Ministry, should refuse to do it, when the *Great Ends* of their Ministry call'd for it, with an *Importunity* that were as hardly to *parallel'd*, as to be resisted.

They who dwell in the *Wilderness*, are afraid at the *Tokens*; They are afraid,—— afraid, that a fearful Decay of real and vital Religion, and of Love to a Glorious JESUS, may have introduced that *easy Disposition* to part with a Faith for ever to be lived upon, which has appeared among you; and may be *severely*, but how *suitably*!——punished in it: And it astonishes them to see what *Stars* the Tail of the *Dragon* has reached in this *Apostacy*.

They mightily approve and pursue the Design of making the *Terms of Communion* to be no other than the *Terms of Salvation*; and of all good Men coming professedly and explicitly to unite on the Basis of that PIETY, on which all the Children of God are indeed for ever united. But yet, (without peremptorily and positively pronouncing of *Damnation*, or using those *Damnatory Expressions*, which don't so well agree with the Temper of Modest and Humble Christians on these Occasions) they are at a loss how they shall suppose the *Terms of Salvation* duly complied withal, where ONE GOD in THREE PERSONS is not prayed unto; and where a *Baptism* into the Name of ONE GOD, and of *Two Creatures*, is made the *Badge of Christianity*: or how they shall suppose, that Men come up to that PIETY, which will

will oblige us to acknowledge them as our Brethren in CHRIET, while they do not acknowledge any CHRIST, but a Son of God who is not *One in Essence* with his Father : but one infinitely inferiour to the most High God ; infinitely different from him, whose Name alone is JEHOVAH.

'Tis true, they are utterly against the *Persecution* of any Men, for their holding of such dangerous and pernicious Errors. They think that all *Good Subjects* and *Good Neighbours*, have a Right unto the Protection of the Civil Government. But they admire at the Rhetorical Flourishes of those Men, who call it a *Persecution*, for Christians to withdraw their *Communion* from such as hold the grievous *Heresies*, which render it impossible for them to carry on their Prayers together.

They cannot comprehend what our Brethren mean, when they require no *Confession of Faith*, from those of their Communion, or any other Declaration and Explanation of their Sentiments, than what they know all the *Hereticks* upon the face of the Earth, as well as the *Socinians*, will readily come into. For they think, some other Denomination, rather than that of *Hereticks*, must be found for them, with whom the *express Words of the Scripture* will not be subscribed unto.

They remember, that there are *Hereticks*, whom our Holy Lord has commanded us to *reject* ; and this the rather, because 'tis no other than what they themselves do, in their *own Sin*, plainly *condemn themselves* unto : *They first reject us*, and the *Faith* which we live upon.

They can by no means come into that Paradox, That there are no *Hereticks*, but *Bad Livers* ; People of an immoral and scandalous Conversation. For there are *Heresies*, inconsistent with, and obstructive, yea, destructive, to a true *Living to God*, which Men of *sober Lives* may be led away withal. In fine,
They

They can't see, that it is any other than a *Spurious Charity*, and the noble Principle of *Catholick Charity* miserably misapplied and prostituted unto evil Purposes, when it extends unto such a Latitude, that we must admit all sorts of *Hereticks*, and even *Mahometans* themselves, to our *Communion*; and compels us to *communicate* with all those whom it would be an unjust thing to *persecute*.

If any thing that any of us have written, be construed, as intended for so loose, and vast, and blind an Extent of *Charity*, there is a *Misconstruction* in it.

But, *Lord, what will be the End of these things?* Your Brethren here, full of Brotherly Love to you, and Care for you, are *trembling for the Ark of God* among you. And hitherto free from your Infelicities, *our God still preserve us!*——We are continually employing our Supplications on your behalf, that our Glorious LORD would *send forth his Light and his Truth*, and restore *Peace with Truth* among you; and heal the sad Wounds which the late Controversies have given you.

'Tis to a Glorious CHRIST, yea, and unto the Holy SPIRIT also, as well as unto the *FATHER of Glory*, that we address these our Supplications.

To Each of these, in the ONE GOD, we ascribe all Glory for ever.

And unto the *Grace*, and *Love*, and *Communion* of these, are you now commended by,

S I R,

Boston, New-England,
September 7. 1719.

Your most Affectionate

Brother, and Servant,

Cotton Mather.



*Some American Sentiments
on the Great Controversy
of the Time.*

*In a LETTER from America, ad-
dress'd to Four Eminent Ministers
in London.*

*To the Reverend Mr. WILLIAM TONG,
Mr. BENJAMIN ROBINSON, Mr. JE-
REMIAS SMITH, and Mr. THOMAS
REYNOLDS.*

Our most Honoured Brethren ;



IT is not without Sollicitations for it,
from some of our Brethren at a Thou-
sand Leagues *Distance* from us, (whose
Case and whose *Peace* lie very near unto
us) that the Pen which now addresses
you, resumes the Liberty of tendering to you some
American Sentiments, upon the Contentions where-
with

with your *Land*, through the *Wrath* of the Lord of Hosts, has been lately, and sadly darkened.

ale's Hist. We should not be insensible, (having been very
England. publickly inform'd of it) That the *Style and Manner*
83. of the New-England Writers does not equal that of the
Europeans: Nor should he who now writes, and
who among them is the least of the Ministers, and
the lowest in Merit, be without a very humble Sense
of his Inability in point of Sense, as well as of Style,
to offer any thing worthy of Consideration among
the Europeans. But because the *American Sentiments*,
whereof I am now going to make you an Offering,
are those, wherein I am so happy as to have much
abler Persons, and Men worthy to be mixed with
the Great Men of Europe, concurring with me; I will
venture thus far to expose them.

I am still endeavouring, my Brethren, to let you
know, what Thoughts are hitherto entertained by
the Best Thinkers among us, upon the Differences
among you; which have raised a new Fire on the
Bush, that yet we are sure shall never be consumed.
And if any Buckets, dipt on the Western Side of
the great and wide Sea, may help to put out the Fire,
'tis the best thing that can be wished for.

How many are the Devices of the wily Adversary,
who has a thousand Arts to hurt the Kingdom of our
GOD! How subtle, how fine-spun, the Strata-
gems, which the plotting Head of the old Serpent in-
vents to do mischief withal; and persuades many
Learned, and even Godly Men, unawares to fall in
withal! Yea, some have been the Tools unhappily
managed in them, at the very time when they have
been learnedly writing of Treatises, which had *Stratagemata Satanae* in the Title of them. Thrice and
four times happy, the Men who can discern and
avoid the Snares! Happy we, if through the Fear of
GOD, we may come forth from them all!

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There are two very Glorious TRUTHS to be asserted at *this Day*; the Reviving, and Publishing, and Establishing whereof, is in a singular manner the *Work of the Day*.

The one is, That every *Good Subject*, and *Good Neighbour*, has a Right to his *Life*, and all the *Comforts* of it; and, That they who do not *hurt*, but *serve* Human Society, have a Right to the Benefits of it; and, That no Man is to be forced with *Civil Penalties* to *profess* and *perform* any thing in *Religion*, whereof he is not convinced in his *Conscience*, that GOD requires it of him. All who do not utter *Principles* and *Blasphemies* directly tending to the *Detriment* of *Human Society*, may challenge a Protection from the *Government*. For the Institutions of our SAVIOUR to be prostituted to *Political Purposes* and *Interests*, this Prostitution is a *Profanation* of them; and GOD will *not hold them guiltless*, that shall fall into it.

The other is, That there are certain *Maxims of Piety*, which all who *truly live unto God* are *united* in: And that all *Good Men* should come into such an explicit and expressed Union upon those *Maxims of Goodness*, as to receive one another to *Communion*, upon a *visible Adherence* to them; not imposing on one another those things, wherein *Good Men* may differ from one another. The *Terms of Communion* should run parallel with the *Terms of Salvation*; and we should *receive one another* where and as CHRIST *receives us to the Glory of God*.

It is too evident, That at this Day, *both* of these Glorious TRUTHS are almost *perished*, in a Nation that *obeys not the Voice of the Lord their God*.

How many, whom all the World must own to be as *Good Subjects*, and as *Good Neighbours*, as any in the World, are unfairly denied the Benefits of *Human Society*; which a *Combination* of People, that are in those Characters not at all superiour to them, have

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monopolized

monopolized to themselves; and this for nothing else, but their Nonconformity to a very disputable Punctilio in Religion? And then, How unaccountably are some Hundreds of Thousands, of as good Christians as any that are to be found any where upon the Face of the Earth, chased from the Communion of the Church, meerly because they cannot conform to certain Matters of doubtful Disputation; which every Man, that is not abandon'd to the most ridiculous Absurdities, cannot but own, that Men may be very Good Christians, and yet not see any Warrant of Heaven to comply withal.

Our Glorious LORD, even He who *forms the Spirit of Man within him*, has raised a mighty Spirit in vast Numbers of Men, for the Reformation of these Abuses. *He that sits in Heaven* will more and more cause them to be *had in Derision*. As Mankind grows Reasonable, these things will be found so contrary to all Reason, and Justice, and Goodness, and of such pernicious consequence to the Welfare of the Nations, that *They*, and the *Abettors* of them, will become extremely contemptible; and the things will be blown away, like the *Chaff*, with an Indignation that will be irresistible: and the pitiful Cries of *Priestcraft*, *Ye have taken away my GODS, and what have I more?* will no longer hold their *Enchanting Efficacy*.

But now, while the Noble Design, of bringing the *Two Glorious TRUTHS* into their Triumphs over the Adversary, is in its Operation, there is *Danger*, lest the Grand Adversary of the *Unavoidable Reformation* encumber it, by causing some of those, who make a *brave Stand* against the *Spirit of Imposition*, to advance *incautelously*, (and it may be with some, worse than *incautelously*!) such Sentiments as have a Tendency to harm and wound the Cause of *Christianity*.

Some of your Servants, the Men on this side of the Ocean, are not altogether without some Apprehension of

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of such a *Danger*, in the *plausible Cry* now so much in vogue, of *Nothing to be subscribed but the Express Words of Scripture*: A Cry which in *former Times* was the usual *Shibboleth* of a Party, whose Intention it was to give away the most *Illustrious Doctrines* clearly revealed in the *Scripture*. But the *Charity* clearly commanded in the *Scripture*, forbids us to *think such Evil* of many Brethren, who in *our Times* are gone into it.

Upon this, let us now a little explain ourselves.

In order to a *TOLERATION*, there may appear nothing requisite, but the *Qualities of Good Subjects and Good Neighbours*, to qualify People for it. But why should *Indulgence* and *Communion* be confounded? Certainly *Forbearance* is one thing, and *Fellowship* another.

'Tis enquired, What are the *Terms*, on which we are to hold *Communion* with one another, in attending and enjoying *together* all the *Ordinances* of the Gospel? And, what the *Terms*, on which the Regards due to *our Brethren in CHRIST*, are to be expected from us?

Most certainly, there are *Damnable Heresies*, which *Good Subjects*, and *Good Neighbours*, and People of sober Lives, may be led away withal. Their *Heresies* may be such, that should we acknowledge them as *our Brethren in CHRIST*, we should greatly *sin against CHRIST* in doing so. Their *Heresies* may be such, as to render the *Object of Worship* infinitely different from *That* which we pay the *Homage* of our Souls to; and so it becomes impossible for us, with any tolerable *Congruity*, to *join together* in our *Worshipping*. Their *Heresies* may be such, as to extinguish the *Life of God* in the Soul, and ruin the *Dependance* both on the *SON of GOD*, and on the *SPIRIT of GOD*, which must *accompany Salvation*. And yet the Men, who have these *Heresies* infecting of them, will *subscribe the Express Words of Scripture*, which they *wrest to their*

own Destruction. Such are the *Heresies* of *Arianism*,
 * *The Followers* and of * *Gentilism*, if ever any *Tares*,
 of *Valentinus* which have been sown by the Enemy,
Gentilis. may be judged so.

In very many *disputed Points* of Religion, they who pull the Saw, may by-and-by shake hands with one another, as *Brethren in CHRIST*; because the *PIETY*, which they *both* mean to support by their several *different Positions*, is one and the same. Yea, even the *Calvinists* and the *Lutherans* may on this account go on together, *not falling out by the way*; for they are *Brethren*. Whereas the *Arian* and the *Gentilist*, obtruding upon us *Another CHRIST*, than He who is our *Life*; this kills our *PIETY* at once. Our greatest *Acts* of *PIETY* must be to *Him* no other than so many *flaming Impieties*: And anon, when he has got you well under, *He'll tell you so!* He brings in *Another Gospel*. And what *Censure* would an *Apostle Paul*, writing to his *Galatians*, have passed on such an one? I don't find that he would have said, *Hold Communion with him*. That is not the *English* of the word *Anathema!*

To introduce an *Indifferency* in our Concern for the *Faith* of the *Three Persons* in the One Infinite and Eternal Godhead, we are with a *continual Dropping* told, that there are *Points of deep Speculation* in it; and that the *Believers* of the *Doctrine* are themselves *not agreed about some ways of expressing* their *Belief* about it. But what! Then is there nothing so *evident* to us concerning the *Divine BEING*, to serve and please whom is the *chief End of Man*, and the *Center* in which all our *Motions* are to terminate, that we must hold *nothing certain*; but acquiesce and coalesce with every one that shall please to tell us, *We are for another God!*

The *Imaginations* of the more antient *Magians*, (before *Zoroaster's* reviving and reforming of *Magianism*) follow'd afterwards by the *Manichees*, had *Points of deep Specu-*

Speculation in them, which might give to *ordinary Christians* no little Perplexity. And yet, I hope, it is to the most *ordinary Christians* a thing past all question, *That there is but ONE GOD*. Because we can't by *searching* find out GOD, we can't find out the *Almighty to Perfection*; shall we receive to our *Communion* a Wretch, (suppose) who will have no other GOD, than what a *Spinoza* shall commend to us?

Ordinary Christians (and *Extraordinary* ones too, even an *Austin* himself!) may find themselves unable fully to explain what is meant by the Terms of *Begotten* and *Proceeding*, when they are applied to Persons in the one Eternal GODHEAD. But yet these *Ordinary Christians* are well assured, that there is a *Person Begotten*, and a *Person Proceeding* in this one Eternal GODHEAD; and that the SON, and the Holy SPIRIT, unto whom we are dedicated in our *Baptism*, with a *Faith* in Them for such Blessings, as none but an Infinite GOD can confer upon us, are the same GOD with the Eternal FATHER. The very *Indians* in my Country are apprehensive of *this*, and would be scandalized at any Man that should go to teach them otherwise.

The greatest Literators among the *Wise Men* of *Enquiry*, look on GOD, *manifest in Flesh*, as a great *Mystery of Godliness*; (which yet hinders not its being *without Controversy*!) and they look on a JESUS, having the *Fulness of the Godhead personally dwelling in him*, as a most *mysterious Person*. And yet the *plain Men*, dwelling in the *Tents* of Christianity, have a full Satisfaction in it, That He who became *Incarnate* in our JESUS, is no less than the *Infinite GOD*. It is a thing which falls within the ken of these *plain Men*, That He who is in any *Degree Less* than *Infinite*, is *Infinitely Less*, and is *not at all* to be called *Infinite*; and, That He who had a *Beginning*, though it were never so many Millions of Ages before any of the Worlds received theirs, is *Infinitely Different* from, and *Infinitely Inferiour*

Inferiour to the High and Lofty One, who inhabits Eternity.

These plain Men understand so much, That when they plead the *Blood* of their Saviour, as the Expiation of their Offences to GOD; the *Merit* and *Vertue* of the *Blood*, which *cleanses from all Sin*, lies in its being the *Blood of the SON of GOD*; [His proper Son, one of the same Nature with him!] And what renders the *Sacrifice* to be so expiatory, is, the *Dignity*, even the *Deity* of him who offered. None but one equal to GOD, can make atonement for the *Sin*, wherein Man has denied him, and reproached him. They think, that it would not have been impossible for the *Blood* of lower Animals to take away *Sin*, if the *Justice* of GOD could have admitted the *Blood* of any meer Creatures, though they should be ten thousand times higher than the Archangels themselves, to have done it. For there is infinitely more proportion between *Bulls* or *Goats*, and the highest of meer Creatures, (they are infinitely more on the level) than between the highest of meer Creatures, and the Infinite GOD.

When, to obtain the Blessedness of the *Righteous*, they repair to, and rely on the *Righteousness* of the Obedience, which their SAVIOUR has, as their *Surety*, yielded to the *Law*, that is, the *everlasting Rule of Righteousness*; it comforts them to think, That He who paid this Obedience to the *Law*, was the very GOD who made the *Law*: so has he magnified it, and made it honourable!

When they commit the *Causes of their Souls* into the hands of their SAVIOUR, it comforts them to think, that He who is their *Advocate with the FATHER*, is his own SON, one set up from everlasting; by him, and always his *Delight*, rejoicing always before him.

When they expect it from their Saviour, to heal all that is amiss within them, to order their whole
Condition

Condition for them, to receive their departing Spirits under his *Custody* in a *Paradise*, to raise their *dead Bodies* from the *Dust*, with astonishing Alterations and Advantages; and then, finally, to bring them into the full Enjoyment of GOD: the *Life* of their *Hope* lies in this, That as they expect Things from their SAVIOUR, which can be done by none but an *Almighty GOD*; so they behold no less than the *Almighty GOD* in their SAVIOUR.

Now, *DEUS suus cuique plurimi fit*. And a Christian, who is but a *plain Man*, living upon the *Consolations* of GOD in his Blessed SAVIOUR; *Consolations* which are not *small* unto him: [No, he'll sooner die than part with them; they are worth *ten thousand Worlds* unto him!] When a *Miscreant* (excuse the Term, you know the Etymology of it!) shall break in upon him with *Insinuations*, *That the GOD, in whom he comforts himself, is but a Creature*; He may indeed, on some account, be called a GOD, but he is not One GOD with the most High GOD; He had a Beginning; and abundance of such detestable stuff: it cannot but give an unspeakable Trouble to him; yea, raise in him an holy *Indignation*, and set a boiling the *Zeal*, which was made for such Occasions. This *plain Man* has yet *Religion* enough to feel and hate the execrable Tendency of the *vile Insinuations*. Perhaps the *Voice* of him that so *blasphemeth*, may for a while cause in him some *Confusion*, because a singular Energy of the infernal *Enemy* often accompanies it. The *Temptations* of *Horribilia de DEO & Fide*, are shot like *fiery Darts* from the *Wicked-One*, into the Soul of a Christian so assaulted and infested. But upon his *Cries* to GOD in the *Battel*, these hellish Molestations being vanquished and vanished, he entertains an *Aversion* for the Men that have gone to commit upon him the worst of *Robberies*; to rob him of his GOD, and of the *Faith* by which he *lives*; the *Faith*, upon the *failing* whereof his very Soul dies within him; the *Faith*,

Faith, of which I must again say, 'Tis worth ten thousand Worlds to him. He may indeed say concerning these *Enemies*, who speak wickedly against his lovely and only SAVIOUR, *I hate them with a perfect Hatred, and count them for my Enemies.* The perfect Hatred is for him to love their Persons, and forbear to do or to wish the least real Harm to them; and yet have such a Dislike for their Heresies, as to let them know, that they are not our Brethren in CHRIST, but Enemies to Him and His Honour, and to us and our Safety.

If you'll give me leave, I would propose the Case of our Friends, who go under the Name of Quakers, and ask our Brethren their Sentiments upon it. The Quakers (refined from the old Foxonian Follies) have now taken up a Notion of CHRIST, which is peculiar to them. The LIGHT WITHIN (which is also their Christ, or the Spiritual Body of CHRIST, the Flesh and Blood which came down from Heaven) is to them a certain Substance; a Real, Spiritual, Celestial, and Invisible Principle; in which they suppose, that God the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit, have their Dwelling. They suppose this Illuminating Substance to be more immediately united to the Word of God, whom we call the Second Person in the Trinity. They suppose, that CHRIST is compounded not only of the Godhead and Manhood, but also of the Third Being, which they call the Light; which Light, they say, is also in all Mankind: and so CHRIST, who is inseparable from it, is in every individual Man that comes into the World, and acts as an Instructor and a Reprover of him. A Notion of CHRIST, more eligible and defensible, than what some Free-Thinkers would now thrust upon us! Well, what Usage now shall we think it proper for these Friends to be treated with! Certainly, a very friendly Usage. We ought to converse with them as Friends, and multiply to them all the kind Offices of Humanity; we ought for ever to avoid, abhor, decry the Persecution which they

they have sometimes met withal ; we ought never to withhold from them the Civilities of an obliging *Neighbourhood* : And yet shall we call them *our Brethren in CHRIST*, whose *Faith* is in a *CHRIST*, which the *Gospel* is an utter stranger to ; and who ascribe the Glories of a *CHRIST*, to a Being that is not really to be so esteemed of ! Or, shall we reckon them qualified for *Communion* with us, meerly because the *Express Words of Scripture* will be subscribed by them ! Indeed there is no fear of *Their* asking for it ; but why should a *Socinian* be of any better Esteem than a *Quaker* with us ?

It is a fair Confutation of the *muddy Mistake*, which they fall into, who make a *Subscription to the Express Words of Scripture* a sufficient *Basis* for Communion in the Church of God ; in that there is not one *Heretick* among all the Professors of Christianity in the World, but what will at the first word come into it. They certainly know, that some, from whom they cannot but withdraw their *Communion*, will come into it : What ! will our Brethren embrace, as their *Brethren in CHRIST*, all those by whom the *Express Words of Scripture* will be subscribed unto ! The *Socinians*, for instance, (mentioned scarce a minute ago) who *deny* the *CHRIST*, whom we *adore* ; who infinitely *blaspheme* the Eternal Son of God ; and with whom a great part of our *Devotions* can be no other than hideous *Blasphemies* ! The *Socinians*, I say, of whom our Travellers (who find many whole Sermons on the *Glories of our Blessed Jesus* preached in the *Moschs* of *Turkey*) make this Remark, That if they would but speak a little more highly of *Mahomet*, [*all in due time !*] there would be no observable Difference between *them* and the *Mahometans*.

The *Romish Idolaters*, will not they subscribe to the *Express Words of Scripture* ! And yet, *Come out from among them, O my People !* saith our God.

Most certainly, the Men with whom the Glorious CHRIST, who is both GOD and MAN in one Person, is neither GOD nor MAN; but a GOD who had a *Beginning*, and a MAN who has no *Human Soul*: These Men are to be accounted *Idolaters* with us, as we must needs be with them. Their CHRIST is a meer *Idol*, and an Invention of their own. But so often is a Communion with *Idolaters* forbidden, in the *Express Words of Scripture*, and the Exclusion of such from the *Kingdom of God* is declared so fully in the *Express Words of Scripture*; that we cannot see why their subscribing the *Express Words of Scripture*, should qualify them to demand from us the Regards, which our *Brethren in CHRIST* have a Right to.

We are very sure, That among them who will subscribe to the *Express Words of Scripture*, there are some, yea, more than a few, from whom it is our Duty to turn away; as from the *Subverters of the Faith*, and the *Enemies* of our SAVIOUR, and our Salvation. It would be a *Sin* in us to *persecute* them; and yet also, it would be a *Sin* in us to *countenance* them, or say, *God speed* unto them.

It appears very strange, that our Brethren should vilify those as *departing from the Sacred Scriptures*, and as *reflecting on the Sufficiency thereof*; who only require, in order to the *Communion* of the Brethren, who are *Partakers* of the *Heavenly Calling*, some reasonable *Explanation of their Sentiments* upon those Articles in the *Holy Scriptures*, which are of the highest and most absolute Importance to a *Life of PIETY*: such an *Explanation* as may let it be known, whether they understand the *Sacred Scriptures*, as directing our *Faith* of those Articles. No, Sirs; 'tis meerly because we *keep close to the Sacred Scriptures*, that we insist upon such an *Explanation of their Sentiments*. Have not the *Men of corrupt Minds* found such *Evasions*, that they will subscribe the *Express Words of Scripture*; and

and yet bring in *damnable Heresies*, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves, and their Followers, a *swift Destruction*? We hold, and no *Protestants* under Heaven can be more *tenacious* than, I hope, we shall be in holding, That the *Sacred Scriptures* are the *sufficient Rule* of all that is to be believed and practised in Religion; and, That every *Christian* has the *Right* of explaining this Rule for himself. But now, I hope, a *Protestant* may have leave to ask his *Brother*, how he understands this Rule, in certain important Articles, which must be for the main rightly understood, by all who are not alienated from the *Life of God*; that he may know, whether he can own him for his *Brother* or no.

I am aware, in how *imperious* a Tone [and, by the way, we *Americans* could be glad, that they who handle the Pen of the *Writer* in their Pamphlets against you, would use less of the *Insolent* and the *Petulant*, in their Style, than what we now commonly meet withal; and less of the *proud and haughty Scorn* dealing in his *Wrath*!] some demand of us, *What!* is not the *Wisdom of God* able to express his Truths in such clear Terms, that we ought to look on all those as having sufficiently embraced the Truths, who have subscribed the Terms which it has pleased him to write them in! We need not be shy of giving a direct Answer to it. We will speak the Words of Truth and Soberness; and say, No doubt of it! But in Fact, it has not pleased his *Infinite Wisdom* to do it. You, *Gentlemen*, do yourselves own that it is in Fact so, if you will but own, that among them who subscribe the *Express Words of Scripture*, there are Millions, upon whom there are sent strong *Delusions*, that they should believe a Lye, and that they shall be damned. And I am sure, this is own'd by every *Protestant*, who

applies the *Thessalonian* Prophecy to those whom it belongs unto : and unto whom it was generally applied by all that separated from *Rome*, until some, who were for paving the way to return thither, tried for another (a very futil and shameful) Exposition.

Verily, we shall have *wherewith to answer him that reproacheth us* ; in saying, That we put our *Trust* entirely in the *Word of God*, for our Guidance in the Affairs of our Salvation. But if it be a Fault in us to require any other than the *Express Words of Scripture*, that we may know the *Faith*, and so the *Life* of those whom we would unite withal, we must have none but the *Three Original Tongues* ever subscribed unto. The *Hebrew*, and *Chaldee*, and *Greek*, are certainly more expressive than any *English Terms*, into which we have yet found ourselves able to *translate* them ; yea, and we are every day mending our Translations. The *Terms* in our *English Bible* are not always the *Terms of God*. We may well wonder at them who see it not, That to insist upon a *Subscription* to the *Express Words*, in any Version we yet have of our *Bible* from the *Original Tongues* ; is as much *Tyranny*, as to insist upon some *other Terms*, which are not in our Version, that so we may know the *Faith* of the Subscribers. And so all the *suspicious Flings*, which we find in our modern Pamphlets against the Term of *Homo-Ousios*, (a Term which saved the Life of the Primitive Churches) might as well have been spared : or the Gentlemen who complain with such Vociferations of *Tyranny*, and *Usurpation*, and *Inquisition*, and I know not what, must be patient, if they find the *Accusations* *re-torted* upon themselves.

'Tis a marvellous Injustice, to charge those Protestants with the Spirit of Popery, and as Tyrannizing over their Brethren, who desire a further Explanation of Sentiments, than the Express Words of Scripture, from those whom they would receive as Brethren. In what we do, our Appeal is entirely unto the SPIRIT of GOD, speaking in the Sacred Scriptures; and we demand nothing, but that the Sacred Scriptures may not be abused and eluded by the shuffling Tricks of Men, who would speak Lies in Hypocrisy, but all the while have the Book of Truth to cover them. Does Popery ever make such an Appeal! or is it not the most effectual Destruction of Popery that can be imagined! For Men to charge us, that we Desert the Sacred Scriptures, when all we do is to Secure them; to charge us, that we Renounce the Sacred Scriptures, when our main Aim is to Preserve them: For Men to flout at us as Creed-Makers, and as Text-Makers, because we fly to the Sacred Scriptures, and would be informed, whether our Brethren do so know THEM, as to be made wise unto Salvation by them: The Folly of doing thus will now be so manifest unto all Men, that we must beseech these Gentlemen to proceed no further, in their Essays to impose upon the World by so palpable a Sophistry; I say, so palpable a Sophistry.

Since our Grand Adversary has not been able wholly to Bereave us of our BIBLE, he must think on Methods to Defeat the Holy Intentions of it. And one of his Methods is, in the first place, to assist Men in finding out many Inventions, to maintain a Legion of Damnable Heresies, under a shelter from the Express Words of Scripture; and then, to raise mighty Calumnies and Obloquies upon all just Endeavours of Reasonable Men, to sift out the Inventions, and fence and guard against them.

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The Matter may yet be a little more exactly settled. Our SAVIOUR has left us the *Laws* of his *Kingdom* in the *Sacred Scriptures*, and the *Rule* of what we are to *Believe* and *Practise*, in order to *Salvation*. He has not left an *Authority* with any *Man*, or *Order of Men*, to *Interpret* this *Rule*; and impose the *Interpretation* upon *other Men*. 'Tis all granted; all allowed. Yea, 'tis a noble Assertion; we'll stand by it. Well; but still every *Protestant* will have the *Right* of *Interpreting* for *himself*. He is no *Genuine Protestant*, if he gives it up. Now, the *Question* with the *Protestant*, is, *Who is it, that, according to my Sense of the Sacred Scriptures, is to demand of me the Regards due to them, who duly embrace the Doctrine which is according to Godliness?* In deciding of this *Question*, he judges for none but *himself*. 'Tis not long before he finds considerable Numbers of *Good Men*, who *Agree* in the same *Judgment* with him. He finds People of *different Sentiments* about many things in *Religion*, but all uniting in *This*; *That the One God, who is the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, is for ever to be adored as our GOD, and acknowledged in all our Ways: That a Glorious CHRIST, who is the Eternal and Almighty Son of GOD Incarnate, and enthroned in our JESUS, is the Redeemer, who has made himself a Sacrifice for us, and on whom we are to trust for our Deliverance from all the Miseries which our Fall from GOD has brought upon us: And, That our Good-Will towards Men should be such, as to do unto them, what we would have them to do unto us.* All of these, be their *Opinions* what they will in *Lesser Matters*, are to him his *Brethren in CHRIST*, and he decides the *Question*, for an *Union* with them. They who agree in this *Decision* of the *Question*, do thereupon *associate* for an *Holy Communion* with one another. While they hold
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this *Agreement*, they continue in their *Communion*. If any of them so change their Minds, that they cannot well continue in it, they are at their *liberty* to withdraw. They who never came into the *Agreement*, have nothing *imposed* on them; they are also at their *liberty* to remain where they are, and find out whom they can *unite* withal. Thus *Liberty* lives in the Perfection of it: The *Sons* of it *sing together, and shout for Joy!* If it should make any havock [*as it will one day a wondrous one!*] upon any *Human Establishments*, and upon the things that must fall, when the *Voice that shakes the Earth*, shall *shake Heaven* too; yet surely the Cause of *Liberty* may be so regulated, that the Cause of *PIETY* shall not be damnified: and *Liberty* will not of necessity involve us into a *Fellowship with the unfruitful Works of Darkness*. I confess, 'tis after all a little odd, that they should ask a *Communion* with us, who cannot but look on the *Religion* wherein we have our *Life*, as a meer *Idolatry*; and who, when we *pray to the GOD of our Life*, cannot join in our Prayers, wherein we call upon a *CHRIST*, as one *GOD* with his *FATHER*; and invoke an *Holy Spirit*, as *Equally and Eternally One GOD* with the *FATHER* and the *SON*. But where, I beseech you, is the *Hardship* of it, if we *deny* our *Communion* to them, who, if it were not for *Secular Views*, would never *desire* it, and who cannot but look on us as great *Idolaters*? Truly, some of us in *America* are so dull, that we cannot (*or are very loth to!*) see into the Plot of those Gentlemen, who, when they have nobly defended the Cause of *Christian Liberty*, carry the Terms thereof so far; that the *Express Words of Scripture* being subscribed unto, *Christians* must have no *Liberty* left them to discriminate between the *Righteous* and the *Wicked*, the *Clean* and the *Unclean*, him that *sacrificeth* and him that

that *sacrificeth not* : but must, with a promiscuous Application of a blind *Charity*, [alas! not *Catholic*, but *Spurious Charity*!] equally receive those who have and hold the *Truth as it is in JESUS* ; and those who say they are governed by the Word of God, when they are not : but *they do lye*, and are of the *Synagogue of Satan*. ——— Truly, *Timeo—& Dona ferentes*.

Yea, Sirs, to be yet more free with you ; there is an *Horror of great Darknes*, which comes upon the Minds of many Good Men in these *Goings down of the Sun* ; from an Apprehension, that there is a strong and a deep *Conspiracy* in our very sinful Nation, to dethrone the Eternal SON of GOD : and that some of our very dear Brethren, when this *Conspiracy* has broke forth in a new, and fierce, and open Operation, have not been so aware of it, as they should have been : but instead of *appearing* to maintain the most Glorious Cause in the World, and rebuke the Men that have *conspired against the Lord*, as they should have done, they have, by a *sinful Silence*, very much expos'd it : and seem'd willing, that the Men who bring in and set up another CHRIST, than He whom we have hitherto believed in, should still challenge the Regards of our *United Brethren*, and be employed in feeding the *Flocks on the high Mountains of Israel*. This is the Representation which we have had of the Case ; and if it be not misrepresented, what is to be looked for ? How much ought we to *tremble in the Fear of GOD*, and be afraid of his *Judgments* ?

Yea, 'tis affirmed, That no *Baptized Nation* upon Earth, advantaged with the free Use of the *Sacred Scriptures*, as *ours* has been ; has in it an *Enmity* to the Eternal SON of GOD, proclaimed in such notorious and such nefarious Instances, as
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what our unhappy Eyes may behold at this day in ours, and should become a *Fountain of Tears* in doing so. The Heart of the Glorious God being so set upon the glorifying of his infinite and infinitely *Beloved SON*, and He having so awfully threatned, *I will plague them that hate him*; there are some who cannot but fear lest this sinful Nation (*Ah! sinful Nation, a People laden with Iniquity!*) be apace ripening for a *Wrath unto the uttermost*, and lest such *Plagues* be inflicted on it, as will call for the Pen of another *Gildas* to give the Relation of them. When the *Day of Vengeance* comes, [*For shall I not visit for these things, and my Soul be avenged, saith the Lord!*] it will be sad, if our Dear Brethren should any of them have cause to reflect upon their own Conduct, and confess, That from a Decay of *Love* to a Glorious *CHRIST*, and from too much Complaisance to some *Secular Friendship*, they did not appear so much as they might have done, to prevent their own share in the common Guilt and spreading Desolation.

But it may carry a Face of too much Temerity in it, for Persons that are so remote from you, to *presume* and *pronounce* too positively on this deplorable Occasion. And yet with all due *Modesty* we may *suggest* something of this Aspect; nor will it be any *Trespass* on *Charity*, but rather an *Action* of it.

However, I hope it will be altogether *inoffensive* to pass to some *American Wishes*, [*for what but Wishes now remain?*] which this long Epistle shall now conclude withal; *Wishes* relating to the *Tempest*, which *afflicts* our *European Brethren*. O *afflicted and tossed with Tempests!*

'Tis to be wished, That the *Mother of Abominations*, that is to say, all *Persecution* for *Conscientious Differences* in Religion, may become *abominable*;

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'Tis to be wished, That the *Mother of Abominations*, that is to say, all *Persecution* for *Conscientious Differences* in Religion, may become *abominable*;
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and that all *Good Subjects*, and *Good Neighbours*, may enjoy all that rightfully belongs to *such*: and that *Protestants* of all *Persuasions* would unite in asserting the *Righteous Cause of Liberty*, and emancipate themselves from the *Church-Tyranny*, which (by the help of the *Secular Arm*) lays an *intolerable Yoke* upon them.

'Tis to be wished, That *all who fear God*, and work *Righteousness*, would, without *Respect of Parties*, and with a well-regulated Spirit of *Universal Charity*, value one another as *Brethren in CHRIST*, and hold *Communion* with one another, in and for all the *Services of the Gospel*; disencumbered from every thing which a truly Religious Mind may have an *Indisposition* to conform unto.

'Tis to be wished, That for the *Manifestation of the Children of God*, they who claim *Reception* with, and as *Brethren in CHRIST*, may so *explain themselves* to one another, as to render it *manifest*, that they do not, under a pretence to the *Express Words of Scripture*, continue under the *Power of those Heresies*, which are inconsistent with the *Life of God in the Soul*, and with *Living by the Faith of the SON of GOD*.

Finally; it is to be wished, That the *Brethren*, (even they who have been heretofore *Fellow-Travelers* and *Fellow-Sufferers* in the *Glorious Ways of Truth and Holiness*, and to this Day have not *thrown away their Shield*) who have too suddenly *divided* from one another, upon a *Controversy about the Best Way of distinguishing the Precious from what should not be esteemed so*; may be yet *precious* to one another, and with a mutual *Amnesty* upon all the *Provocations* that may have happened in the *Day of Temptation* that has passed over you, return into one another's Arms, and resolve *together* to carry on what they have to do for the *Kingdom of*

of God, and bear all due *Testimonies* for the *present Truth*, and the *Faith* which has been *delivered to the Saints*; and which cannot, without the *Loss* of a *Good Conscience*, be made *Shipwreck* of. What a *Jubilee* would the *Tidings* bring to the Churches in these *Christian Colonies*?

But I forget the *Direction*, *Epistola non debet implere Manum Legentis*. I shall at this time add no more; but that, as *my Brother* has in his *Dedication* of his valuable *Treatise on the GODHEAD of the Holy SPIRIT*, rendred you publick Thanks, for your *appearing in Defence of the Eternal Trinity*, with writing what you may hope, that our *Blessed Redeemer* will not be *ashamed* of owning, in the *Day* of his appearing; I now do so too: And that, so far as I understand what you have done, is thankfully entertained in all our Churches; and your Performances have endeared you to them.

I am sure, they have greatly done it unto,

Most Honoured Brethren,

Boston, New-England,
July 1. 1720.

Your most Affectionate

Brother, and Servant,

Cotton Mather.



To the Reverend
Mr. Thomas Reynolds.

S I R,



Have perused the Letter, which gives to you and your worthy Brethren, some *American Sentiments on the Great Controversy now among you*; as well as what was written by the same Hand, about three Quarters of a Year ago, and happily published, and dispersed thro the Nation: And tho it is not proper for me to give any Character of the *Writer*, to whom I am so nearly related; yet I may, and I do give my *Attestation* to what is *written*, and with my aged and dying Hand here declare to you my *Satisfaction* in it.

I have also, with the *Heart* of a glad Father, beheld the two Treatises of his younger Brother, (my Son *Samuel Mather*) lately appearing in the Defence of the most *Glorious Cause* that can be maintain'd among the Children of Men. I cannot but wonder, that when Providence says, *Who is on the Lord's side?* any Good Men should, from
 prudential

prudential Considerations, decline subscribing their Names unto it: in the mean time, *I have no greater Joy, than to hear that my Children walk in the Truth.*

I enjoy very singular Mercies of Heaven, having been for *Sixty Three* Years together employ'd in the Publick Service of the Churches of Christ; wherein *having obtain'd Help from God, I continue to this Day.* And I would esteem it not the least of them, that I live to see my *Sons*, and even my *Grandsons* also, *speaking with the Enemies* of their Great Saviour *in the Gate.* Nevertheless, now being in the *Eighty-third* Year of my Age, I cannot but see much *Labour* and *Sorrow*, to wean me from this *present evil World*, and make me long (which I have many Years done) for my Dismission to that *Heavenly World*, where the CHRIST, who is *our Life*, is seen and own'd in all *his Glory.* But I must confess, in this Close of my Pilgrimage, there occurs to me scarce any thing so much to embitter it, as to see the *Indignities* offer'd unto the Eternal Son of God in a Baptized Nation; where the *Impieties* are so aggravated, as to raise a just Fear in Religious Minds, of dreadful Judgments impending over it.

When I was in *London*, thirty Years ago, in a Publick Appearance for this Country, the Use which it pleased a Gracious God then to make of me, to accomplish the *Agreement of the United Brethren*, I reckon'd among the more *Signal Mercies* of my Life. That I now live to see (what I could then have little imagined) some of the *United Brethren* (tho, I hope, a very few) fallen into very *grievous Heresies*, and a *Division* rais'd among those who remain yet sound in the Faith, about the *Methods* and *Measures* to be taken, for asserting and preserving that most Important and Illustrious Doctrine of Godliness, *One God in Three Persons,*
the

*the same in Substance, equal in Power and Glory :
This I must reckon among the more Signal Trou-
bles of a Life drawing near to the Grave.*

I am (and have long been) taking my Leave of
this World, and am as much as may be uncon-
cerning myself with it, waiting for the Blessed
Hour, ——— Lord, when wilt thou come unto me !
Yet I could not but give it you under my Hand,
that I am glad of what my two Sons have written,
to serve the Cause of the Truth, which is now la-
bouring among you. I am

Your most Affectionate

Boston, New-England,
July 1. 1720.

Friend, and Servant,

in CHRIST,

Increase Mather.

F I N I S.



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